

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 SAIGON 10323 100036 Z

70

ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 AID-20 OMB-01 IO-13 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-07 H-02 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01

PRS-01 SS-15 USIA-12 EUR-25 ACDA-19 IGA-02 RSR-01

/160 W

----- 050754

P 091320 Z JUN 73

FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2936

USDEL JEC PARIS PRIORITY

USSAF NKP PRIORITY

CINCPAC PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L SAIGON 10323

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MOPS, VS

SUBJECT: MILITARY SITUATION IN KONTUM

FOLLOWING SENT ACTION SAIGON FROM NHA TRANG JUNE 9
REPEATED TO YOU

QUOTE NHA TRANG 0600

REF: A. NHA TRANG 0593

B. NHA TRANG 0597 (JUNE 9 SIT REP)

1. SUMMARY: POLOFF HAS PROVIDED ADDITIONAL DETAIL ON SITUATION
TO WEST OF KONTUM CITY, WHICH INDICATES THAT POOR RF PERFORMANCE
ALLOWED OR AT LEAST AIDED NVA OCCUPATION OF TRUNG NGHIA VILLAGE
(REF B). ARVN 23 RD DIV COMMANDER, BGEN CAM, INCENSED AT
RF PERFORMANCE, HAS SENT BATTALION OF 44 TH REGT TO REINFORCE
PRESENT GVN DEFENSIVE POSITIONS AND EVENTUALLY COMMENCE
OPERATIONS
TO RETAKE TRUNG NGHIA AND POLEI KRONG. ONCE ARVN BATTALION IS
COMMITTED, CONTROL OF OPERATION WILL PASS FROM SECTOR COMMANDER
TO GEN. CAM. NVA/ VC OBJECTIVES STILL SEEM TO BE LIMITED TO
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 SAIGON 10323 100036 Z

TERRITORY ALREADY TAKEN. KONTUM CITY REMAINS GENERALLY QUIET, ALTHOUGH SOME MONTAGNARDS AND ETHNIC VIETNAMESE HAVE ALREADY SOUGHT REFUGE IN PLEIKU. END SUMMARY.

2. INFORMATION AVAILABLE TO POLOFF AS OF 1730 JUNE 9 INDICATES THAT 3 RF COMPANIES HOLDING DEFENSIVE POSITIONS ON WESTERN OUTSKIRTS OF TRUNG NGHIA VILLAGE WITHDREW IN DISORDER NIGHT OF JUNE 8-9. TROOPS GUARDING BRIDGE AT ZA 146.902 ALSO WITHDREW. WHILE UNITS WERE UNDER HEAVY NVA PRESSURE, LAST NIGHT'S WITHDRAWAL MAY REFLECT POOR ORGANIZATION AND DISCIPLINE. RF UNITS ARE NOW ATTEMPTING CONSOLIDATE POSITIONS IN VICINITY OF DAK LECK VILLAGE (ZA 159.905); RF FORWARD CP IS AT NEARBY FIREBASE (ZA 168.912).

3. ARVN 23 RD DIV COMMANDER, BGEN TRAN VAN CAM, CAME CLOSE TO APOPLEXY WHEN HE LEARNED MORNING OF JUNE 9 THAT RF HAD WITHDRAWN AND THAT SECTOR COMMAND HAD LOST CONTACT WITH THEM. HE ADVISED JGS OF POOR RF PERFORMANCE AND SAID DIVISION WOULD NOW HAVE TO ASSIST IN OPERATION. CAM HAS THUS ORDERED 1 ST BN, 44 TH REGT -- WHICH HAD BEEN HELD IN RESERVE IN KONTUM CITY -- TO REINFORCE RF AT DAK LECK. TWO COMPANIES OF ANOTHER RF BATTALION THAT HAD BEEN STATIONED ALONG QL-14 ARE ALSO BEING SENT IN TO TAKE UP DEFENSIVE POSITIONS VICINITY ZA 170.880. (RVNAF ALSO MAKING HEAVY USE OF TAC AIR AND ARTILLERY.) POLOFF BELIEVES KONTUM HAS NO OTHER RESERVES, AND RVNAF APPARENTLY HAS NO PRESENT PLANS TO REQUEST TROOPS FROM PLEIKU.

4. MEANWHILE, NVA/ VC PRESSURE CONTINUES SOUTHWEST OF CITY ON POSITIONS NEAR PLEI KLOR (ZA 139.836) HELD BY 252 ND AND 254 TH RF BATTALIONS. HOWEVER, ENEMY ACTION IN THIS AREA MAY BE DIVERSIONARY; MAIN PRESSURE STILL COMING FROM TRUNG NGHIA/ POLEI KRONG AREA, DUE WEST OF KONTUM CITY. EXCEPT FOR ONE MINOR ABF NORTH OF CITY MORNING JUNE 9, OTHER APPROACHES REMAIN QUIET. (TO NORTH OF CITY CAM HAS ONLY ONE RANGER BATTALION AND TWO BNS OF 53 RD REGT; THESE UNITS WOULD CERTAINLY NEED REINFORCEMENT IN EVENT OF MAJOR ATTACK DIRECTLY FROM THE NORTH.)

5. NO FIRM CASUALTS FIGURES YET AVAILABLE. THREE RF COMPANIES IN TRUNG NGHIA REPORTEDLY TOOK SEVERAL KILLED AND ABOUT 20 WOUNDED AND HAD 100 OR MORE MEN MISSING OVERNIGHT JUNE 8-9. EXTENT OF CIVILIAN CASUALTIES SIMILARLY UNKNOWN, BUT REPORTS CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 SAIGON 10323 100036 Z

BY SOME OF THE 2,000 REFUGEES FROM POLEI KRONG AND PLEI TCHAR (ZA 164.843) WHO HAVE REACHED MARYLOU CAMP INDICATE NUMEROUS ABDUCTIONS, SO CIVILIAN CASUALTIES MAY BE FEWER THAN ORIGINALLY BELIEVED. CIVILIAN POPULATION OF TRUNG NGHIA VILLAGE NOT YET ACCOUNTED FOR.

6. CIVILIAN AND MILITARY TRAFFIC FROM PLEIKU ON QL-14 HAS CONTINUED ALL DAY, WITH BRIEF INTERRUPTION WHEN CIVILIAN RICE TRUCK WAS DISABLED VICINITY ZA 199.700 AT APPROX 1040 HOURS AND TWO ARVN CONVOYS BEHIND IT HALTED TEMPORARILY WHILE FLANKS OF HIGHWAY WERE SWEEPED. ONE VERSION IS THAT RICE TRUCK WAS HIT BY B-40 ROCKETS, BUT THIS HAS NOT BEEN CONFIRMED. IN ANY CASE, THERE HAS SO FAR BEEN NO ENEMY ATTEMPT TO CLOSE ROAD AT CHU PAO PASS.

7. PLEIKU PROV REP ADDS THAT A NUMBER OF MONTAGNARD REFUGEES FROM MARYLOU CAMP ARRIVED AT PLEIKU POW CAMP MORNING JUNE 9; THOSE INTERVIEWED SAID "MANY MORE" INTENDED TO FOLLOW THEM. A SMALLER BUT ALSO UNDETERMINED NUMBER OF ETHNIC VIETNAMESE REFUGEES HAVE ALSO ARRIVED IN PLEIKU; THEY SAY MANY PEOPLE ARE EAGER TO LEAVE KONTUM BUT ARE BEING PREVENTED FROM DOING SO BY PROVINCE SECURITY OFFICIAL. PROV REP SPECULATES THAT FURTHER FIGHTING IN KONTUM COULD PRECIPITATE A DELUGE OF REFUGEES INTO PLEIKU.

8. WE ARE CONTINUING PRECAUTION OF STATIONING AN AIR AMERICA CHOPPER IN PLEIKU TONIGHT AND WILL DO SAME NIGHTS OF JUNE 10 AND 11, ALTHOUGH THERE IS NO RPT NO INDICATION THAT EVACUATION WILL BE NECESSARY. IN KONTUM CITY AT PRESENT ARE TWO USG EMPLOYEES (POLOFF AND ACTING PROV REP); TEN WESTERNERS AT MINH QUY HOSPITAL; AND MORE THAN 100 VIETNAMESE AND MONTAGNARD EMPLOYEES AND THEIR DEPENDENTS FOR WHOM WE FEEL RESPONSIBLE. SIGNED TEARE UNQUOTE
WHITEHOUSE

CONFIDENTIAL

NNNNMAFVVZCZ

*** Current Handling Restrictions *** n/a

*** Current Classification *** CONFIDENTIAL

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts:
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 09 JUN 1973
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: elyme
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973SAIGON10323
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GDS
Errors: n/a
Film Number: n/a
From: SAIGON
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t19730620/aaaajbvr.tel
Line Count: 149
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 73 NHA TRANG 0593
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: elyme
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 20 AUG 2001
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <20-Aug-2001 by kelleyw0>; APPROVED <16-Oct-2001 by elyme>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: <DBA CORRECTED> jms 980209
Subject: MILITARY SITUATION IN KONTUM
TAGS: MOPS
To: CINCPAC
EA
JEC PARIS
SECSTATE WASHDC
USSAF NKP
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005

